



## Office of Hon Anne Tolley

MP for East Coast

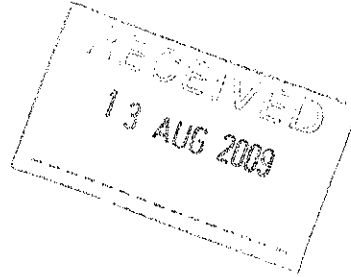
Minister of Education

Minister for Tertiary Education

Minister Responsible for the  
Education Review Office

12 AUG 2009

Nancy Bell  
Chief Executive  
National Office  
Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa  
PO Box 12 725  
Thorndon  
WELLINGTON 6144



Dear Nancy Bell

Thank you for your letter of 20 July 2009 requesting consideration of your recommendations in relation to tertiary funding caps on teacher supply, reduction in professional development funding, and the termination of the Centre of Innovation research project.

The value of early childhood education is well recognised and this Government is committed to making it possible for all children in New Zealand to benefit from the advantages of engaging in high quality early childhood education.

You recommend that consideration is given to lifting the funding cap on ECE initial teacher education until such time as the teacher supply is fully resolved. I recognise that some early childhood services struggle to find qualified teachers and I am working to find ways to alleviate this.


The 2009 budget decisions that affected the continuous funding of professional development programmes and ceased funding for the Centres of Innovation programme were not made lightly. The current economic climate has required a reprioritising of expenditure. This has resulted in a focus on initiatives that increase access to and participation in early childhood education opportunities for those children and families in areas that have lower than average rates of participation. This is particularly important for Maori and Pasifika children as these groups feature predominately in the statistics relating to irregular or non-attendance in early childhood education.

As you are aware, funding for professional development is being reduced. However, this is not the end of Government-funded professional development. At this stage I can indicate that the intended date for a request for proposals to be advertised for early childhood education professional development contracts funded by the Ministry of Education is likely to be early 2010, with contracts commencing in July 2010. Any future Ministry of Education funded early childhood professional development will be clearly focused on the Government's priorities for early childhood education.

This focus will support children and families most at risk of poor educational outcomes to be able to take advantage of early childhood education opportunities that reflect their own communities. New initiatives will provide opportunities for the early childhood education sector in New Zealand to engage in innovative research and practice. The knowledge gained from the Centre of Innovation research will also continue to influence and support quality teaching in the sector.

Your concern for the young children of New Zealand is acknowledged.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Tolley', with a long horizontal stroke extending from the top of the 'A'.

Hon Anne Tolley  
Minister of Education